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The #1 Killer of American Men and Women—Heart Disease

Learn how to keep your heart healthy and lower your risk for heart disease

EAU CLAIRE, Wis. - February 27, 2015- Heart disease is the leading cause of death for both men and women in Wisconsin and the United States. To prevent heart disease and increase awareness of its effects, the Eau Claire City-County Health Department is proudly promoting American Heart Month during the month of February.

Each year, more than 610,000 people die from heart disease---just as many women as men. In Wisconsin, more than 34% of deaths are caused by cardiovascular disease. Cardiovascular disease refers to several types of heart conditions including, but not limited to stroke, chest pain (angina) and heart attacks that interrupt the flow of blood to the heart and brain. 175 deaths were attributable to heart disease in Eau Claire County in 2012.

The Health Department is encouraging our community to take the time to learn more about how to keep their hearts healthy. Many forms of heart disease are highly preventable for people who know the risk factors and also know how to reduce their risk. The top five risk factors for heart disease are: high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes, lack of exercise, and diet.

“We need to eat healthy and be active. It is as simple as that” say Beth Draeger, RDN, CD, CBE and Public Health Nutrition Supervisor with the Eau Claire City-County Health Department. “But for many it is not that easy. Taking small steps to make life long changes make living a heart healthy life more achievable.”

You can make healthy changes to lower your risk of developing heart disease. Controlling and preventing risk factors is also important for people who already have heart disease. To lower your risk:

- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Quit smoking and stay away from secondhand smoke.
- Manage your cholesterol and blood pressure.
- Drink alcohol only in moderation.
- Be active at least 30-60 minutes a day
- Eat at least five to seven servings of fruits and vegetables every day.
- Practice effective stress management

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